



**U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Office
Western District of Texas**

Johnny Sutton, U.S. Attorney

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BARRIO AZTECA GANG MEMBERS INDICTED AND ARRESTED

United States Attorney Johnny Sutton announced today that yesterday a federal grand jury returned an 11 count indictment charging various subjects with racketeering (RICO), a RICO conspiracy, extortion, a money laundering conspiracy, a conspiracy to possess various controlled substances, as well committing violent crimes in aid of racketeering, including assault and murder. The subjects are charged with committing the racketeering activity as leaders, members and associates of the Barrio Azteca criminal enterprise.

The indictment alleges that the Barrio Azteca gang operated its criminal organization through its command structure, and the gang implemented and executed its criminal racketeering, drug trafficking, and money laundering activities in the El Paso, Texas and Ciudad Juarez, area. They promoted and protected their power and their operations through threats of force, intimidation, assaults, and murder. The Barrio Azteca through its command structure has perpetuated this "scheme" since its inception in 1986, and it continues to this day.

"This criminal gang disrupts the lives of law abiding El Pasoans through intimidation, violence and drug trafficking," stated U.S. Attorney Johnny Sutton. "Those who choose the gangster life will soon learn it's a dead end street ending in prison or worse."

This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation with vital assistance and cooperation from the El Paso County District Attorney's Office, as well as the United States Marshals Service, El Paso Police Department and Texas Department of Public Safety.

A indictment is a formal accusation of criminal conduct, not evidence of guilt. Defendants are presumed innocent unless and until convicted through due process of law.

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